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E X A M I N A T I O N
O F T H E
F A C T S *and* R E A S O N I N G S
I N T H E
Lord Bishop of C H I C H E S T E R ' S
S E R M O N

Preached before the
House of L O R D S
On the 31st of J A N U A R Y last.

Humbly addressed to His LORDSHIP.

The THIRD EDITION, Corrected.

L O N D O N :

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MY LORD,



HAVE read some very extraordinary Sermons on this same Occasion, and heard of many more such; but considering the Place, and the Preacher, I believe there have been found few more notable than that preached lately by your Lordship.

In your Sermon upon *Church Authority*, you drew so much Trouble upon your self, by your unwary Positions, no wise favoured by Scripture, and successfully exposed by a Brother Prelate (famous for his Love and Defence of Truth, however unfashionable and disgustful) that I hoped you would have proved more circumspect in any Labours of yours, that were to be afterwards presented to the World. I am therefore sorry, that you should again lay your self open; and whilst

you are scattering your publick Rebukes, should deserve one your self.

I should indeed have still thought you too wise and moderate, to be capable of reviving old Heats and Partialities, had you not in Fact done it: Nor else could I have imagined that you would again venture into the World another Performance so very loose and exceptionable, that even your Friends condemn it, and think it ill judged, and unfair.

I know nothing more repugnant to the Spirit of the Gospel, than for one professing to preach it, to enlist himself a Champion of a Party, indeed almost of any Party; since most Parties are too visibly heated and influenced by Motives altogether worldly, passionate, and human; nor so much concerned what serves the Interest of Truth, as what serves the Interest of Faction; and are generally Foes to Truth, where Truth interferes with them. Surely 'tis unworthy a Preacher of the Gospel to fence with or against Sounds, to equivocate and lay false Colours, to discover Faults on one side only, to invent Merit on the other, and to darken, or disguise, or suppress Facts; instead of informing, to mislead, and to heighten popular Animosities, instead of calming them: All this is the Work, not of a Preacher, whose Province is Truth and Peace, but of an Apologist who hides or adulterates the Truth; of an Inflamer, who would create Rage and Strife.

Whether such wicked Use hath not been made of this same Anniversary, Experience too sadly tells; and whether your Lordship hath made a right Use of it, whether you have been utterly unmoved by the Spirit of Party, and of your Order, and have censured without Prejudice or Partiality, I leave to your own Conscience, and the Consideration of our Readers.

Your

Your Lordship begins with the Use which is to be made of History, and particularly of the impious Fact then to be commemorated. But I doubt, in making use of that Fact, you are too narrow, and have omitted one of the principal Uses (whether in tenderness to the Memory of that Prince, or in mistaken court to other Princes) namely, what bitter Effects he felt from his Thirst of unbounded Power; that in violating his Duty, he brought Misery upon himself; that if he had observed the Laws, and protected the Rights of his People, his People, and the Laws, would have protected him; but that by following evil Counsels, and his own arbitrary Will, whilst he was misguided by flattering and ambitious Bishops, and oppressed his Lay Subjects, he lost the Hearts and Confidence of his People; and by pursuing lawless Measures, taught his Enemies to destroy him against Law.

Another obvious Use to be made of this Fact, omitted likewise by your Lordship, is, thence to warn Princes against being seduced by pious Flattery, or any Flattery; nor to suffer Sycophants, especially religious Sycophants, the most dangerous of all others, to inspire them with evil Passions, or to sooth such Passions as they already have. King *Charles* the First had raised the Power of the Church, even beyond his own; and the Churchmen openly asserted their Power to be independent and unaccountable; independent even of the Crown, though they had sworn the contrary; and in Return for his suffering them to usurp upon him, they encouraged and prompted him to usurp upon the Kingdom. Thus the two lawless Powers were to support and recompense each other. It was indeed a plain, a wicked Bargain, struck between the Crown and the Mitre; both bent to enslave these Nations, and to divide Shares in the

common Oppression. For the Clergy are not wont to serve either God or the King for Nought; and though they be spiritual Men, whose only Business is to guide us to the other World, they are seldom satisfied with a small part of this, which they are always teaching others to renounce. It was well said by a Reverend Doctor to an Assembly of Doctors, "If you would teach the Laity to condemn the World, shew them the Way, by contemning it first yourselves."

Is not this a true Account? Had not the King, and the Clergy, by breaking all Bounds, and by invading the Privileges and Properties of all Men, drawn down a general Odium upon both Crown and Mitre? And has your Lordship fully, or at all, opened and owned this Matter? Have you warned Princes and Churchmen against aspiring to more Power or Wealth than the Constitution has given them; against the Iniquity and Infamy of violating their Trust, a Trust so important and sacred? Have you warned them against the Consequence and the Curse of Ambition and Violence?

Your Lordship repeats the Words of Your Text, *to fear the Lord and the King, and not to meddle with them that are given to change*; and you "add, that "had our Forefathers followed this "Advice, the horrid Fact we this day lament, had "not been committed." My Lord, I say, if that Prince, and the Churchmen then had follow'd this Advice, that horrid Fact never had been committed. Who were addicted to change? Was it the King and Churchmen? Or was it the People? Not the People surely, who seem to have been entirely contented with the Form of Government, and not to have had a Thought of another, till they were daily more and more incensed by the merciless Oppressions of the Court and the Bishops. My Lord *Clarendon* owns the good Temper and Inclinations of the People, which were so remarkably

ably peaceable, that thence, he says, many wonder'd the more at the prodigious Change which afterwards happened, and seems to lay the blame of all upon Archbishop *Laud*.

The Question therefore is, Who were the Aggessors? Who began Enormities, who defied and overturned the Law? Was it the People? No. It was the Court and the Clergy, and both rioted in lawless Rule for a long course of Years. After this Change, this alarming Change, where all Law and Security were swallowed up, it was natural for other Changes to follow; and when once a general War was begun, no Change nor any Excess was to be wonder'd at. Had not the King disregarded, and even overthrown Law, he needed not have been a Martyr to publick Resentment, nor even to a particular Faction. Neither can I comprehend what you mean, when towards the end of your Sermon, you say, "That the Crown" is *now* limited by Law;" as if it had not been so then.

I agree with your Lordship, That "the like" can never happen again, if Posterity will have "the Wisdom to take warning from this Example." But to condemn indiscriminately all that was done, especially at first, against the King, and indiscriminately to extol his Character and Reign, is the ready way to encourage the like to happen over and over. It is plain his Son was thus encouraged, and thus came to suffer as well as his Father; nor can I say, that the Fate of the Son was less miserable than that of the Father, but rather to any Man of Spirit more miserable. I am moreover very inclinable to fear that, were Times to change once more, we should hear higher Encomiums upon the Martyrdom of 88, than upon that of 48, (if that be possible) and from the same Men too. We should then be told what Concessions the Martyr King *James* made, and
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how sincere he was in them, be told how criminal they were who would not accept them; though 'tis manifest he made none with any the least Intention to keep them. Nay 'tis probable we should be told too, that he had a divine Right to do what he pleased, and none had a Right to controul him, or to expect any Concessions at all from him; and that all which has been done since, has been only successful Rebellion. For what has been too wicked or too mad to be said upon both these Occasions already, and upon both these Kings?

That his Father was very sincere, your Lordship takes upon you to determine roundly. Though the Violation, the repeated and continual Violation of his Coronation Oath, his passing the Bill of Rights, and owning all these Rights to be legal and just, and thence confessing that he had broken them all, nay, his violating that very Bill in all its Parts, almost as soon as he had passed it; were but ill Marks of a Heart very upright and sincere. Of all these Excesses he was guilty at a Time when his Parliament were well disposed for the honourable Support of his Government, and free from any design to distress it, much less to alter it; nay were ready to grant him very noble Supplies, if he would but have suffered Justice to be done upon publick Traytors, the infamous Instruments of illegal Power, and of mutual Distrust between him and his People.

Whilst I am upon this Head, I would take notice that he actually committed or attempted to commit all the Enormities, all the Acts of Usurpation committed by the late King *James*; levied Money against Law, levied Forces and obliged his Subjects to maintain them, against Law; was even charged with having raised a Body of Foreign Soldiers, to destroy the Law and enslave his People at once; dispensed with all the Laws; filled the Prisons with illustrious Patriots who defended the
Law,

Law, and themselves by the Law; encouraged and rewarded Hireling Doctors to maintain that his Will was above Law, nay itself the highest Law, and binding upon the Consciences of his Subjects on pain of eternal Damnation; and that such as resisted his lawless Will, resisted God, and were guilty of Impiety and Rebellion: He robbed Cities of their Charters, the Publick of its Money and Liberty, and treated his Free-born Subjects as Slaves born only to obey him.

It is said he was not a *Papist*: Perhaps he was not, that is, not a Subject to the Pope of *Rome*; but he was bent upon setting up a Hierarchy in *England*, resembling that of *Rome* in all its Power and Terrors. Nor does it avail, if Men are to be persecuted and oppressed for their Conscience, whether they suffer from the Tyranny of a *Hildebrand*, a *Luther*, or a *Laud*. All persecuting Religions are alike terrible to those who alike hate or dread all persecuting Religions. It is certain, that of all the Dissenters, none but the Papists had any Mercy shewn them, and these were in high favour.

It is also certain, that for all these Exorbitances he underwent much Affliction and a severe Lot afterwards, from Men too who had no sort of Right to inflict it. But they did by Power as he once had done, used it wantonly and without Mercy or Law. This I candidly own: But your Lordship, who strongly represent his Fate, says nothing of his Crimes; and surely Oppression and Usurpation are great ones, and big with all Crimes: Crimes of which that unhappy Prince seems not to have had a true Sense, if any: Nor is his Repentance apparent, though God knows he had abundant Cause for it. Here therefore is a powerful Objection against his Sincerity; since it does not appear that he was struck with any Sense of his Guilt. Can a Man be

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said to own his Fault, who justifies himself, and seems conscious of his Innocence.

It would have been but fair in your Lordship, to have shewn his Errors and evil Doings, as well as his Sufferings. The former you scarcely touch, and therefore are an Advocate, not an Instructor.

In your second Paragraph there is a doctrinal Passage which seems to deserve some Attention: You tell us, *to fear the Lord*, means, to us Christians, "To believe and practise the Doctrines and "Duties taught by Christ in the Scriptures, or "by his Ministers agreeably thereto." I thought it had been enough to believe and practise them as taught by him; that all farther Authority was needless; and that submitting to the Deductions of the Clergy from thence, or to their Paraphrases upon these, was no Part of our Duty. If such Deductions or Explanations appear to us true and rational, we must believe them though they came from a Layman: If we think them false or partial, will your Lordship say, that we are to believe them, because they come from the Clergy?

I beg your Pardon, my Lord, if I mistake your Meaning. But in your Words there seems to lurk a sort of latent Claim of Right in the Clergy to interpret the Scriptures authoritatively. If you mean so, nothing is more dangerous or untrue: If you mean no such thing, why do you add, *or by his Ministers, agreeably thereto*? Who are to judge of this Agreeableness? If their Hearers, if the Laity are the Judges, then such Words were needlessly added, and stand for nothing; and there is an end of all Church-Authority, and of any Pretence to it. But if the Clergy are both to interpret and to judge for others, then there is an end of all Liberty, of all Judgment and Conscience amongst Men, and the Clergy are all so many Popes, infallible and irresistible; which I presume your Lordship will

will not say; and shall be glad to hear you talk clearly upon this Subject, of itself clear enough; but often darkened and wrested by Design.

Your Lordship tells us, (p. 6.) that “*to fear the King*, is to obey him — that is, in a limited and legal Government, to observe the Laws — and that this is the certain Rule of Obedience, which leaves all Men without Excuse, who pretend Ignorance.” This is true. But did not this very Rule leave King *Charles I.* also without Excuse? For, if he were to be exempted from the Rule, your just Distinction of a *limited and legal Government* had been absurd. He therefore having the Laws for his Guides, sinned against Knowledge: Nor, had he been ignorant, would it have excused him; since it was his Duty to inform himself. Nor is my Lord *Clarendon's* Plea of his Ignorance, a good Plea. Besides, I think the King declared at his Trial, that he understood Law as well as most private Gentlemen in *England*.

Your Lordship, repeating again the Words of your Text, tells us, that “we are advised by it not to mix, or familiarly converse with such as are given to change, lest we be seduced by them to Idolatry,” &c. An Advice entirely applicable to that King, though your Lordship makes no such Application. It was from him and his evil Counsellors the Change began. Why did he converse with such, why did he nourish and employ them? Why was he governed by them? Why did he listen to them more than to the Voice of his Duty and of the Laws? Had not his *Papish* Queen, weak and bigotted as she was, prodigious Influence over him? Had he not *Papish* Ministers of State, *Papish* Counsellors? And had he not about him hot-headed and arbitrary Bishops, continually instigating him to Innovations? So that had he observed this, or any sober Advice, he must have banished all the

Papists from his Court, and all other Parasites, Ecclesiastical and Civil.

Your Lordship well observes, That one of the best Preservatives against Vices of all kinds, is, to avoid bad Company; for that there is a strange Contagion in ill Example. But you have not told us how much King *Charles 1.* was corrupted and misled by bad Company, by arbitrary Ministers and flattering Prelates. Very true likewise is what you say, that "there is a specious Outside in every Vice, which flatters our Senses, and is but too agreeable to one or other of our Passions." But the Application of this Truth to that Prince is again forgot. Were not the Principles of Lawless Rule dressed up to him in very alluring Colours, and was he not entirely misled by them?

Every Vice, you say, has its Party, who dress it up in the most attracting Colours, and represent its opposite Virtue to the greatest Disadvantage: You add, that Vice, in their Account of it, is *sociable and good-natured; 'tis Manliness, Good-breeding, Pleasure, and Liberty.* Now, my Lord, (after I have assured your Lordship, that I never heard any of my Acquaintance make any such Encomiums upon Vice) give me leave to ask, what is a more horrid, a more complicated Vice, than lawless Power; than abrogating the Laws, and robbing Nations of their Liberty and Rights? Did not King *Charles* do this? Was not violent Power his Darling? Was he not bewitched with the wicked Doctrines that support it? Were not these Doctrines recommended in the most pleasing Lights, and even in the Name of the Lord? Was it not become the common Theme of the Pulpit, especially in the King's Pulpit, to represent Servitude as Duty, and Tyranny as the Ordinance of God?

These Observations, my Lord, fell naturally in your Way; and why you made them not, you can best

best tell. But, to apply to the King what your Lordship applies to Vice: He found in the end, that all such Representations in favour of unlawful Power were mere Delusion; that the Pleasures he was flatter'd with were false Pleasures; sweet indeed in the Mouth, but all Bitterness within; that no two things are at a wider Distance, than lawful Power, and Power usurped; that Submission to the Laws is the most perfect Freedom; and that those Flatterers and Preachers, who seduced him from his Oath and his Duty, whilst they promised him Monarchy without Controul, were themselves aiming at uncontrouled Power over the Monarch.

Thus they dazzled him with the Lustre of Power, and he blindly pursued it; till, by grasping at too much, he risk'd, and at last lost the whole.

What you say further of Men given to change, p. 7. is too general, and may serve for any Party, and any Time; but may be very justly applied to that King and his Counsellors; as, "That they acted from Motives of Avarice or Ambition, from Disappointment or Revenge, or to mend a bad Fortune — from Vanity and Self-conceit, from a Levity and Fickleness of Temper, from a scheming Head, and a Love of innovating in Religion and Government for innovating sake," &c.

What follows is true in some measure, but very loose and declamatory. If, for example, "some Men are against whatever is uppermost, and seem to dislike what is established, merely because it is so"; are there not others, who know no other Reason for liking what is established, but purely because 'tis established? Are there not some who have particular and large Interest and Advantages in being for the Establishment, and must seem either to like the Thing, or lose the Pay? And will they not always have something very plausible to urge in favour and defence of their Gain.

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“ What Religion, you ask, what Establishment of Religion; what Church in any Country is so perfect, as not to leave Room for finding Fault?” Give me leave to say, my Lord, that the less room there is, the better it is; and that if there be any Faults, they ought rather to be mended than defended. This I presume your Lordship will allow; and I should likewise be obliged, if you would please to inform me, whether the Clergy have ever been remarkable for mending their own Faults, or for thanking others for mending them, or even suffering them to do it: I doubt it will be found, that wherever Religion has been defaced or debauched, it was the Clergy who did it; that wherever Religion has been reformed, it was the Laity that reformed it. “ In the Opinion of religious Men, (says Sir *Francis Bacon*,) “ the Church never wants Reforming: As if “ Castles and Houses might want Repair, but “ Chappels and Churches never do. The Use I would make of this is, that we cannot always well depend upon the Word of the Clergy, whether the established Church any where, be perfect or defective, or how far she is so.

Your Lordship goes on to ask, What Forms of “ Words so compleat and unexceptionable; what “ Discipline so well framed, or so well executed; “ what System of Faith and Doctrine so wisely “ drawn up; where a national Clergy so well qualified for Virtue and Learning, so pious, so prudent in the Discharge of their Offices, as to “ leave no Place for Exceptions, for Objections, “ for Scruples, for Censure, for Reproach?” I doubt, no where; and if Churchmen and Churches be thus imperfect, thus fallible and frail, every Man must be left at perfect Liberty to leave them wholly, or to join with them in part, as to himself seems most rational and fitting: Every Man ought to be free to discourse or write concerning these

these Churches and Churchmen whatever he judges fit; to urge his Objections, to defend his own different Opinions, if he have any, and to propose Amendments where he thinks he sees Faults. To deprive him of this Liberty, would be unjust and unchristian; since his conforming against Inclination is Hypocrisy; and surely the Clergy would not commit such a heinous Sin, as to make or encourage Hypocrites: And if he conform by Choice, he wants no other Motive.

What therefore can be said for Archbishop *Laud*, and the Clergy of that Time, who plagued and persecuted all Men (but the Papists) for not submitting blindly to their arbitrary and selfish Injunctions as to so many divine Institutions? Were not they the Men given to Change, to a Change fatal to Conscience and civil Liberty? And is not this the natural Result of blending Power unnaturally with Religion, which resides wholly in the Soul, is the Effect only of Conviction, and can never be subject to Force? Nor was it the only Time when Religion was banished, to make room for the Hierarchy.

It is very true what your Lordship says, that no Forms of Words, no Systems can please all Men. This you ascribe to the love of Change. My Lord, I will give you a Reason worth a thousand of yours. In matters of Religion, all Men have a Right to judge for themselves; and as the Variation and Difference in the Opinion of Men is endless and infinite, the Sentiments of some Men can never be the Sentiments of all Men; and 'tis notable Folly to aim at fixing a general Standard of Thinking; and notable Wickedness and Tyranny to force Men to submit to it. Do they who compose such Systems and Forms, maintain that they are all derived from the Word of God, and virtually contained in it? Then he who believes the Word of God, believes these; and this would be
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sufficient, if the Composers meant no more. The truth is, (and your Lordship knows it well) that their Meaning has too often been, to subject Men, not to Christ's Authority, but to their own.

Can no Systems, no Forms, please all Men? What then is to be done? Even to leave all Men at full Liberty to take them, or to reject them. Knows your Lordship a better, or indeed any other Christian Rule? We all know that Christian Rules, and Ecclesiastical Rules, have often been very different, in truth, very opposite things. Neither is your Reasoning just, when you arraign the People, especially the Bulk of the People, with being addicted to change in Matters of Religion. I believe the Truth is on the other Side; and that they are rather apt to be persevering and obstinate, as in all their Habits, so particularly in their religious Habits, be the same right or wrong; as the Clergy themselves, when such Habits do not please them, are apt to contend. They therefore who would force or persuade the People into new Forms, or out of their old Forms, are the Men given to change. Pray, who are they that have every where, or any where introduced Changes and Adulterations in Religion? Who are they who in too many Countries have converted Religion into a Monster? Not the People, 'tis well known; your Lordship knows it well. At one Time, and indeed for several Ages, Christianity was almost lost in the World; lost in the gross Forgeries and Impostures of the Priests: Or if it was foundany where, it was chiefly found amongst the *Albigenses* and *Waldenses*, who, I think, had no Priests at all, at least, none pampered with Wealth, and intoxicated with Power. Let others declare, whether, if our Clergy do less harm, than in Popish Countries the Clergy do, and observe some Circumspection, such their Behaviour and Forbearance.

bearance be owing to our Constitution, to the Spirit of the Legislature, or to their own Spirit. What Changes, what dangerous and ridiculous Changes, were made, or attempted, by *Laud* and his Brethren, I shall take notice by and by.

As to Forms and Ceremonies, 'tis certain, that if they are about Things indifferent, 'tis a Shame to argue in their Defence with such Men as think them sinful, and consequently not indifferent. 'Tis as certain, that whatever is not really a part of Religion, ought to be kept out of the Church; not only for fear of Offence, though even this be a good Reason, but for fear of creating Superstition in the common People, who will for ever take whatever is joined to Religion, to be part of Religion, though declared over and over again to be Matter of Indifference. To multiply, therefore, such Causes of Superstition, is sinful and scandalous, where ever 'tis done; and *Laud*, and his Adherents were continually doing it, to the seducing of many, and to the disgusting of more. Are there no Forms of Words, no Systems, that can please all Men? Surely there are not; and this perhaps is an unanswerable Reason against imposing such Forms and Systems upon Men. To impose them upon such as dislike them, is notorious Tyranny, and altogether Antichristian.

Were I to pursue this Subject, it would lead me into many Reflections. Give me just leave to say, that where there is the least Grimace, and Pomp, and human Contrivances in Religion, especially in a Country of much Light and Liberty, like ours, there the fewest Handles are given for upbraiding or ridiculing the Clergy, who can expect no other whilst such Handles subsist. I might add, that the surest way to preserve and perpetuate the Power of Religion, is to restore Religion to its original

Simplicity. But even to gain this great and valuable End, I am for no Violence, no sudden Changes, no altering Foundations, or shaking the Constitution, or for changing the Frame of the Church, or for withdrawing her Revenue. Nor do I know any such terrible Men as your Lordship suggests to be bent upon any such Change. And considering that I think the Pretender's Game to be altogether desperate, I cannot foresee any Change so fatal as that which the vast Increase of the Clergy's Property must one day, if it go on, certainly make. This I think demonstrable from Figures. I am not sure that this is a Change which troubles or alarms your Lordship.— You will not surely reply, that there are many Clergymen and their Livings very Poor. My Lord, there are also many excessively Rich. Why does not the wealthy Brother support the Poor? The Truth is, they must be all excessively Rich, and the Laity excessively Poor, if the Scheme goes on for a course of Years. Will not this be a Change, a terrible Change in the Constitution? And who are the Men given to such a Change?

In p. 8. you tell us of the Force of Enthusiasm, how easily Enthusiasts are seduced, how apt to think their Cause “ the Cause of God, which
 “ allows no Delays, admits of no Restraints;
 “ Times and Places, and Persons and Things must
 “ all give way to what the Enthusiast calls the
 “ Work of God, &c.” All this is very true, and what then? Were there no Enthusiasts at that Time, or since, but the Sectaries? Your Lordship must know better, and it had been but fair to have owned it. Have not many Churchmen been notable Enthusiasts, possessed with very foolish and very false Notions, which they themselves took to be
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be so many divine Truths? Indeed every hot-headed Man, who takes the Heat in his Head to be Religion, is an Enthusiast: Nor did I ever know any Party in Religion, established or not established, but what had Enthusiasts amongst them; and I have known as vehement Enthusiasts in our own Church as in any. Whoever places Sanctity in Names and Trifles, is an Enthusiast: Whoever reverences Sounds, or Postures, or Colours, is one: Whoever thinks that worldly Power is necessary to Religion, is one: Whoever would hurt another for any religious Opinion, is one, let him call that Opinion by as odious Names as he pleases, even *Herefy* or *Schism*, or even *Deism*: Whoever applies the Judgments of God to others, that is, calls their Misfortunes by the name of divine Judgments, is an arrant Enthusiast, if he be in earnest, and worse if he be not. In short, whoever builds upon Religion any Superstructure of his own, and then contends for it as a real part of Religion, is an Enthusiast; as is he who sees Holiness in things inanimate and irrational, or thinks that Holiness can be conveyed into such, whether the same be Earth, or Walls, or Garments, or Appellations.

But I hope I need not prove to your Lordship that there have been Mad-men, that is Enthusiasts, of the Church, and for the Church, in all Times. No Man knows it better than you. Pray what was Archbishop *Laud*, Bishop *Cosins*, and the other Innovators and Persecutors of this very Time about which you now preach? If they were not Enthusiasts, fierce and raving Enthusiasts, they were much worse: and the best Apology that can be made for them, is, that they were stark mad. Did they not contend that all their Forms and religious Curiosities, with all their various eccle-

fistical Heraldry, were of divine Right, even their Deans and Chapters, even their Chancellors, Archdeacons, and even their miserable Bishops Courts? And did they not make Men swear to this? Did they not frame Oaths with an *& cætera*, that no Man might have a Possibility for not being Perjured? Did they not make a Canon, obliging all the Clergy of *Scotland* to Swear to a Liturgy which was not then made, nor till a Year afterwards?

These are Changes which in your Harangue against Men given to Change, you take no notice of; though to me they seem terrible and impious Changes. These are Enthusiasts whom you have not mentioned, nor seem to have meant. These were Enthusiasts with Power, formidable Enthusiasts. "To serve God, they trampled upon all the Laws of God and Man"; to use your Lordships Words: And I agree with your Lordship, that it is very afflicting (I cannot say with you, that 'tis very surprizing; for 'tis too common) "to see what a Frenzy of Enthusiasm poor ignorant Men have been worked up to, by specious Pretences to a purer Religion, or a more exalted Devotion, through a blind Zeal to advance what they call the Kingdom of Christ." It is indeed afflicting, to see Men such ready Dupes to Delusion and Deluders. Just such Enthusiasm have we all seen, just such Frenzy raised, by a blind Zeal for the *Church*; and 'tis this very Zeal, blind indeed, which has more than once filled above half the Nation with religious Fury. The very Day, my Lord, which you celebrate by this Sermon, has been abused to raise that Fury, abused to revive and perpetuate religious Rage and Strife. I wish the Abuse were at an end. I must again use your Lordships Words, to say, That "what makes

“ makes this the more afflicting, is, that they are
 “ worked up to this Madness by Men who do not
 “ believe themselves a word of what they say, by
 “ Men who are themselves the vilest Hypocrites,
 “ void of all true Virtue and Religion.”

Your Lordship proceeds, and says, that “ When
 “ such Men cannot ruin the established Religion
 “ this way, then they set up for zealous Asserters
 “ of the Rights of Subjects in religious Mat-
 “ ters.” The asserting the Right of the Subject
 in religious Matters, is, I hope, no Mark of En-
 thusiasm, nor infers that he who does so, aims at
 misleading Enthusiasts. This I know well, that
 when *Laud* and his Followers, then and since,
 drove at aggrandizing themselves, at settling strict
 and universal Uniformity, that is to say, Church
 Tyranny, they set up for zealous Asserters of the
 Rights of the Crown, and gave it such Rights as
 it never had, at the Expence of the Law, and
 even of the Word of God, upon which they al-
 ways fathered all their most impious Inven-
 tions. Their Flattery to the Crown was mon-
 strously insidious and impudent: For, whilst they
 freely complimented it with the Liberty and Pro-
 perty of the Laity, they were themselves daily
 undermining it, and robbing it of its most valuable
 Prerogatives and Strength.

This Observation has likewise escaped your
 Lordship, though it was so very obvious. If
 Fault was then found with the Teachers of Reli-
 gion, it was not because they taught; but for what
 they taught, which God knows was faulty and
 wicked enough. What you say about crying up
 the Law of Nature (which, by the way, our Sa-
 viour never cried down) and about Infidelity, is
 not applicable to those Times, which claim a very
 different Character; and I fancy your Lordship
 means

means the Times present; how justly, I shall consider by and by, as also how Men contract a Dislike to the Church and Churchmen. Let me here just humbly represent, that throwing at Random the Charge of Infidelity, has ever been a Practice too common with those of your Cloth; and such of them as have been the loudest in that Charge, were generally the warmest Advocates for Priestcraft. For, that there has been, and is Priestcraft in the World, your Lordship I presume will not deny.

There is another Proposition of yours quite too general, and, I doubt, not true; "That Men who are of a restless, turbulent, factious Temper, with respect to Government, are always ready to join in their Complaints against the Religion established, and in their Endeavours to seduce Men from it." Your Lordship, more zealous than cautious in asserting just what serves your present Purpose, forgets that for these forty Years, ever since the *Revolution*, most of those who were the most restless, the most turbulent, the most factious against the Government, have been noted for rigid Churchmanship, distinguished by their Attempts to advance the Power and Interest of the Church. Such were King *William's* greatest Enemies, such the late King's, and such the present King's. Were not the Members of the famous *French* League, all Zealots to Popery? So far were they from seducing Men from it, that they destroyed all who were not for it. Yet that League was a terrible Faction combined against that Government, all strictly of the established Church, yet bent against the established Government; and they pursued their wicked Ends, not by endeavouring to ruin, but to advance and aggrandize the established Church.

Whether

Whether “ the greatest Strength of the Government ever did, and ever will lie in the Fidelity and Affection of the Members of the established Church,” as your Lordship roundly affirms, I shall now a little consider: And first allow me to say, that this is oddly affirmed. It is no more than affirming, that as most of the Nation are Members of the established Church, they will be the strongest Support of the Government, as long as they are faithful and affectionate to the Government. My Lord, have they always been so? Did the late King find them so? And did he not find, does not his present Majesty find, that the Dissenters have been universally so? My Lord, pardon me for saying, that it is a wild Assertion, that Monarchy cannot stand without the Church? What Proof is there of this, but that they once fell together; and it was the Church that in Effect pulled down the Monarchy. This surely is a bad Argument, that the Monarchy is altogether supported by the Church. Does not our Monarchy subsist in *North Britain*, where Presbytery is established? And do not the Presbyterians there, as they, and other Dissenters do here, heartily adhere to our Civil Government; when almost all the Churchmen there, and too many of them here, have been zealous to destroy it?

If Presbyterians formerly, and other Dissenters, opposed the Crown, it was evidently because the Crown, miscounselled by the Bishops, oppressed them, cruelly oppressed them; and Oppression will make a wise Man mad. When they were not oppressed, they never resisted; and have ever been steady to every Administration that protected them. Can your Lordship say the same of Churchmen? Have not Churchmen rebelled, without Provocation,

tion, or Oppression, or any ill Usage, merely from an intemperate Spirit of Pride and Power? The Endless Enterprizes of Prelates against the Crown make a great Part of our History: And even long since the *Reformation*, the wise, candid, and famous Father *Paul* expresses great Fear for the Crown of *England* from the Power and Claims of the Bishops: He says, "He sees the Horse bridled and saddled, and just ready to be mounted by his old Rider." Even in the pious Reign about which you preach, the Supremacy of the Crown was boldly denied by the Clergy; and Archbishop *Laud* had intimidated the Judges from granting Prohibitions, though the Judges could not, without Perjury, refuse such Prohibitions. What Regard thinks your Lordship had this great Prelate to Conscience, and consequently to the Salvation of Souls, or even to the Monarchy? What Regard had the Judges, even in this Instance, to their Oath and Duty? those very Judges of whom you speak so well, nay so kindly?

How is it, my Lord, that the Church only can support the Government? Is it by her Doctrines of Obedience? All our Dissenters profess the same Doctrines to Princes that protect them; and have never yet falsified their Professions. Can Churchmen boast as much? These have indeed infatuated some of our Princes with extravagant Notions of Power and Obedience. But did they ever stand the Trial themselves? No; none ever resisted more fiercely; sometimes without one Blow, or any just Offence given them. These mad Doctrines are therefore not to be relied on: If they had, King *James II.* who weakly trusted to them, might have died in his Throne: And in paying a just and legal Obedience, all Sects amongst us concur. Nor will any Prince who is not as weak

s King *James*, and, like him, deluded by Priests, trust to any other Obedience. Were the Dissenters once against the King? I have given the Reason. Nor does it from thence follow, that they are not hearty Friends to the Government. The Churchmen were once against Parliaments; is therefore the Church to be charged with being against the Government?

I use the word *Church* in the Sense which you and all the Clergy use it; a Sense which has prevailed through Custom, but is indeed impertinent and unjust. For, your Lordship knows, that the word *Church* is never used either in the Old or New Testament, to mean the Bishops or Priests alone, but generally intends the whole Assembly of the Faithful, and often means the People alone without the Priest or Minister. But the Clergy have every where usurped it to themselves, against all Truth, and served their own Ends notably by it.

Your Lordship's Reasoning about Government, p. 9. is mostly true; but the Application is again, either quite dropped, or very defective and partial. You say it is a very complicated Question, What Species of Government is best for the People, &c.? Without entering into this Enquiry, I am convinced that our own is the best for us; namely a King and Parliament, the People represented, the Laws inviolable, and the only Standard of Power and Liberty. Now who departed first from this excellent Frame? was it not the King, and the Clergy who governed the King? Your Lordship would not surely have found it a very complicated Question, Whether Governors keep or break known

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Laws?

Laws? That King *Charles* did so, is Fact, and a Fact that it would have become your Lordship to have owned. You own that Men given to Change may urge plausible things in their own behalf, though such a Change is sure to throw things into Confusion. I ask again, Who began the Change? And whether, since a Violation of the Laws naturally ends in Confusion, and indeed brings it, Opposition to such Violence, may not produce Order, and has not sometimes done it, though not always? That King had plausible things said for him and for his arbitrary Government; his Necessities were urged; Laws were pretended to justify his breach of Law, and he was said to be the Vicegerent of God whilst he was acting like a very bad Man. But about these things your Lordship is intirely silent.

What follows is chiefly haranguing, and may be turned any way, but chiefly against that King; though I entirely acquit your Lordship from intending it. What you say about Seducers and Inflamers, is also too confined. It becomes a Spirit of Truth and Peace to expose all Seducers, and all Incendiaries at all times: Was King *Charles's* Reign and Court free from them? Was the Church free from them? Whilst we remember the Enthusiasm and Violence that followed, let us not forget the Domination, the Superstition, and High-Church Fanaticism that went before, and seem to have begot and introduced the other. I think it manifest, that till the Church and the Crown had begun a Change, no other Change was thought of: And whoever begins any Mischief, is, in a great measure answerable for the whole.

Whilst

Whilst your Lordship was inveighing, with becoming Warmth, against Inflamers, Innovators, and the like *Pests* of Government, it would have been no Digression to have observed, how much the Martyr's Court was infested with such; that more especially Parasites (and the worst of all, spiritual Parasites,) were the Bane of his Reign, and even of our Constitution; that perhaps one of the greatest Defects in our Government, has been its Tame-ness in suffering the Clergy to preach the People out of their Liberties; as was their Practice during the Reigns of all the STUARTS.

Perhaps it were too much to wish that you had likewise warned us, to be upon our guard against a Body of Men continually pursuing selfish and separate Advantages: Men who have often with deceitful Words, seduced Princes from their Duty, engaged them in Acts of Violence, and consecrated even their Iniquities; Men who have sometimes pursued their Point even to Extremity, and to the Subversion of publick Liberty, in order to share with the deluded Prince in his Violence, yet cloaked all their unhallowed Doings under the Name of the Lord. Who have so often as they (to use your Lordship's Words) "been watching for
 " a Change, and lain in wait to deceive, and
 " to seduce the People from the Obedience
 " which both Reason and Religion taught
 " them to be due to the higher Powers? —
 " Since there is no knowing where to stop, or
 " what Extravagance they may be gradually
 " worked to in following the Seduction of such
 " Guides." — I add, Guides, such as *Laud*,
 and his Brethren, who were never quiet till

they had “carried things to Extremity, and “subverted the Constitution.” They too, my Lord, had their specious Pretences in the midst of their evil Pursuits, and talked of God’s true Religion, of asserting the Rights of the Church and Monarchy, of suppressing Schism ; and that “they intended nothing, if you would “believe them, but the true Service of God “and the King.” So that the Sectaries afterwards wanted not a Pretence for their pious Cant and violent Measures.

There is the more reason for reviving these Truths, (for Truths they are, as certain as any in History) for that most of the Sermons on this Occasion have been nothing else but confident Apologies for all the notorious Usurpations of the Court and the Clergy ; and the Preachers generally either boldly defend them, or deny them, or are silent about them. I could wish your Lordship had been more candid, and explicit upon the same Subject. You dwell upon the Consequences of the War, and the Change, the violent Change, which it produced, and labour to raise the Passions of your Hearers and Readers against one Side only. The Excesses, the Provocations, the continued Enormities of the other Side, which occasioned the rest, you hardly touch, and when you do, ’tis with a gentle and palliative Hand.

My Lord, I who have no Reserves, and love a fair Representation of things, can see and confess wicked Counsels, Hypocrisy, execrable Measures, and flagrant Breach of Trust on both Sides: I own that the King and the Clergy had hard and cruel Usage; that he was destroyed by a Faction; that the Laws were abolished, and
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a Tyranny set up: But still, from whence are we to trace the first Cause? And did it not begin from the Court and the Clergy? Hence proceeded the first Distrust, and Breach of Union and Confidence between the King and his People: Hence arose the first Aversion to the Churchmen: And, as it was the Monarch who created a Disgust to Monarchy, it was the insolent Spirit of Churchmen that made the Church odious.

Your Lordship justly detests the Murder of the King: So do I. But I likewise detest the Murder of the Constitution, which he and his Counsellors had for many Years trampled upon, and endeavoured to overturn for ever. One of the Uses therefore to be made of the Day, is, to expose lawless Rule, flattering Counsels, an aspiring and corrupt Priesthood, with the Danger and Sin of violating Publick Trust, and abusing Power.

Your Lordship "will not say that there had been no occasion given by the Court for Jealousies and Fears." How tenderly spoken! when the Law was actually preached down, when the King's Will was preached up as the only Law; when no Man obnoxious to the Court had the Benefit of Law; when the Liberties and Properties of all Men were subjected to the Caprice and Passion of one. My Lord, he had been guilty of as many publick Violences as his Son King *James* was afterwards, and continued them much longer.

Your Lordship will not say, that "there was not sufficient Reason for Opposition in a Parliamentary way." Had he not laid aside Parliaments; laid them aside for twelve Years

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together? Had he not made it penal even to talk of Parliaments? Nor does it at all appear, that he ever intended to call another, till the Distresses brought upon him by his wanton Conduct, and by the wise Advice of the Bishops, (who involved him in a War with his own People about Words and Forms, and the violent Establishment of Prelacy in *Scotland*) forced him to it. Nay, I think it apparent, that he very early meditated to rule like his Brother of *France*; at least, that this bad Spirit was infused into him by his traiterous Counsellors, and particularly animated by the Bishops and Clergy. But I avoid, as your Lordship does, to enter minutely into the History of those unhappy Times, though perhaps not for the same Reason. I only ask your Lordship, suppose he had never called a Parliament, What would have been the adviseable Remedy, what the Method of Opposition then?

You say, "that whatever wrong Measures had been taken, which might endanger the Liberties of the Subject" (my Lord, this very soft Language no wise represents the Excesses of that Reign) "what was most offensive of that kind" (still very tender) "was by the Advice of his Council, &c." So were the worst of King *James's* Measures; so are the Measures of the *Great Turk*, and of every Tyrant and Usurper in the World. It is too true that the worst Kings, the greatest Oppressors, will ever find complaisant and officious Counsellors, and the most wicked Measures find Parricides to defend them. Had not *Nero*, had not *Caligula*, Ministers and Instruments,

ments, as barbarous as themselves, to justify all their Barbarities, and even to advise and inspire them? Have not all the most bloody Tyrants that ever plagued and afflicted Men, found such impious Counsellors and Defenders? Indeed, had there never been any such wicked Advisers and Instruments, there never could have been such mischievous and pernicious Princes.

You add (very surprizingly) “ with the
“ Concurrence of his Judges, Judges in gene-
“ ral of good Character, and well esteemed in
“ their Profession.” I cannot help thinking that this Account is extremely amazing from your Lordship. My Lord, they were publick Traitors, Enemies to their Country, the Hirelings of Power, Wretches who sanctified by the Name of Law, as many of the Clergy did by the name of Christ, the most complicated Wickedness under the Sun, that of overturning all Laws human and divine, and of enslaving a whole People. It avails not what Sufficiency they had in the Knowledge of the Law, farther than to condemn them; nor does it avail what has been said to their Advantage, nor what your Lordship says, since Facts the most notorious contradict it. Will your Lordship say thus much of King *James’s* Judges? And did King *James’s* Judges go greater Lengths to legitimate lawless Power and Oppression? Amongst them too there were able Men; they were therefore the more inexcusable. The truth is, both these Princes seem to have considered their Judges as the Machines and Champions of Usurpation, as the abandon-

ed Instruments of cancelling Law by Chicanery.

What your Lordship labours next, is to vindicate the Sincerity of the King's Intentions in his Declarations and Concessions, "to govern for the future by the known Laws of the Land, and to maintain the just Rights and Privileges of Parliaments." I have already taken some Notice how sincere he was, and how much his Actions contradicted his Declarations. He had already contradicted over and over, all his Professions to former Parliaments; he had manifested such an Affection for lawless Power, and such a settled Intention to introduce it, such a Fondness for the Promoters of it, and such Dislike of all other Men and Measures; that it was no wonder his last Parliament was loth to trust him, and for guarding themselves with all possible Securities against a Relapse into their former Bondage: And I doubt his Readiness in his Concessions, was no proof of a Purpose to observe them. They still remembered how wantonly he had broke his Coronation Oath, the Bill of Rights, and all the Ties of Law, seized their Properties, and imprisoned their Persons. And all his Compliance seemed only the Effect of Distress, all his other Resources having failed him; nor had he Recourse to Parliament, till Violence, and Power, and Stratagems, and every Scheme of Support from any other Quarter, had miscarried; and he conformed to old ways, when new would no longer do.

This seemed to be the Opinion of the Parliament, and this the Ground of their Distrust. They remembered his Professions to former
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Parliaments, and how little his Actions had corresponded with these his Professions; how he had insulted Parliaments when he thought he could subsist, however lawlessly, without them; how wantonly he had dissolved them, how barbarously he had used their Persons after such Dissolution, a Dissolution called by my Lord *Clarendon*, *unreasonable, unskilful, and precipitate*. These Jealousies, my Lord, possessed the whole Parliament, at least a great Majority; and some concurring Accidents terribly heightened them, particularly his supposed tampering with the Army in the *North*, and the *Irish* Massacre. Yet amongst all these Alarms, which your Lordship must allow to have had great Weight, there seems not the least View (I think 'tis plain there was not) in that Assembly, to abolish the Monarchy, or to introduce a new Government. It was composed of many great and able Men, who all concurred in putting Restraints upon the King, such as he might not be able to break through. What Events followed no Man then foresaw, or could foresee. A War ensued, and on both Sides there appeared considerable Men.

Yet the Great Men who adhered to the King, though they thought the Parliament too violent, seem to have had no Confidence in him, that he meant well to the Constitution: and it was probably owing to such their distrust of his Humour and Designs, that after the Battel of *Edge-hill*, where he had the Advantage on his side, they did not proceed to *London*, where he might have had a Chance for being Master. They who gave him good Counsel at *Oxford*, found but cold Countenance

nance there, and some of them were disgraced : Nor could he ever prevail upon the Members whom he had drawn thither, and called his Parliament, to declare the Parliament at *Westminster* Rebels, though this was a Point which he had much at Heart, and laboured hard, and complained heavily of his Disappointment, nay, reviled them by the Name of his *Mungril Parliament*. The Fate of the excellent Lord *Falkland*, his principal Secretary of State, deserves notice, and seems to have proceeded from his utter despair of seeing a good Issue from either Side. And, if I remember right, it appears even from my Lord *Clarendon*, that the Concessions which the King made proceeded from no Purpose to observe them.

What your Lordship says of the King's Adherents, is not conclusive. If they were of the Nobility and Gentry, and Men of Fortune; so were those of the other Side, especially till the Army desperately and wickedly assumed the Government to themselves. What followed was indeed infamous and horrible, the Murder of the King, and a Military Government. *Cromwel* was a notorious Hypocrite and Usurper, and richly deserved the Fate which he made the King suffer.

Your Lordship seems likewise to fail in the last Proof which you offer of the King's Sincerity and good Intentions, namely, his Christian Fortitude at his Death.

My Lord, this Reasoning will justify those who doomed him to die. Did not the *Regicides* meet Death with great Intrepidity, some of them with Raptures? Do not almost all Enthusiasts die so, even the most criminal
and

and bloody, even Traitors and Assassins? I think the Goodness of his Intentions had been more clear, had he fairly owned the many grievous Iniquities of his Reign, his Oppressions and arbitrary Rule. But we see in this, as in other Instances, the great Partiality of Men to themselves and their own Actions, and how little their Opinion ought to weigh in such Cases. Cardinal *Richlieu*, who had done a thousand Acts of Violence and Injustice, saw at his Death no Guilt in any part of his Life, especially as a Minister. Did not the Earl of *Strafford*, who had been a great Oppressor of Publik Liberty, and of his Country: Did not Archbishop *Laud*, a hot-headed Monk, who had caused so much Violence and Confusion, both die with clear Consciences? Nay, did not *Gortz*, Baron *Gortz*, the most barbarous Villain that ever counselled or served a Prince, he who had served his Master the late King of *Sweden* in the most merciless Measures, and indeed advised them; go to his Execution, not only without any Reproach from his own Heart, but even praising himself? These wicked Men valued themselves upon their Loyalty to their Prince. But execrable and infamous and inconsistent is that Loyalty which misleads Princes, and ruins their People.

In your Vindication of the King's Adherents, your Lordship is again too loose, and you say many things at random.

To what you say against *Cromwel*, and against the Violence and Hypocrisy of his Agents, I have no Objection; only that the Style seems not to resemble that of a Sermon. I should

however have thought you impartial, had you shewn the like Warmth against the first Authors of our Confusions. Some of your Language is applicable enough to the latter; "There was so much Injustice, Violence and Oppression; so much Arbitrariness and Cruelty in their Proceedings, accompanied with the vilest Hypocrisy and Falshood."—For Law and Religion, my Lord, were still pretended by *Laud* and his Faction, even whilst they were oppressing Justice and Conscience.

You just confess, That "the indiscreet Zeal of the Friends of the Church, and the Severity with which they pressed a Compliance in Things indifferent, or of small Consequence, upon Persons of different Persuasions, whose Aversion to a Compliance increased in proportion to the Zeal with which it was pressed, prepared Fuel for that unhappy Fire." This is mentioned in a very temperate Style, though as proper a Topick as any in your Sermon, to have been opened and explained with Warmth and Indignation. My Lord, do these few cold Words make a proper Picture of that Violent and Arbitrary Time? What your Lordship thinks, I know not; nor do you perhaps care what I think about it. Let us leave it to our impartial Readers.

I have before answered what you repeat and dwell upon; namely, that the King could not have fallen, had the Church stood.

You say, that they who ruined the Church, had for their Pretence pure Religion, and a further Reformation. Had there no ground been furnished for such a Pretence? Was there

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no need of some Reformation, when the Clergy were (very many of them) going back every Day to Popery, and ruining all their Brethren who would not go back with them? Were they not daily introducing Popery, the most dreadful part of Popery, its terrible Power, its vindictive and intolerating Spirit? Perhaps they meant not to restore the Pope: But the Superstition of Popery was increasing every Day, as also the Pomp of Popery, with Persecution, the most dreadful Engine of Popery. Archbishop *Laud* was already affecting the Title of *Holiness*, and *most holy Father*. The Books of Papists were licensed by his Chaplains, or approved by himself: New Books against Popery, were by him forbid to be printed; some such already printed were called in: Passages against Popery were struck out in others. The best Protestant Books of long Standing, and formerly published by Authority, were not suffered to be reprinted, not even *Fox's* famous Acts and Monuments, a Common-place Book to Protestants of their Sufferings and Burnings under Queen *Mary*, and of the Popish Cruelties then and before. The very *Practice of Piety*, a Protestant Book, which had gone through six and thirty Editions, was not permitted to be reprinted. Bishop *Wren* put this extraordinary Article amongst those of his Visitation, "That the Church-wardens in every Parish of his Diocese, should enquire whether any Persons presumed to talk of Religion at their Tables, or in their Families." It was made one of the Articles against Bishop *Williams*, that he had said, "He did not allow the Priests to Jeer, nor to make Invectives
" against

“ against the People.” It was another Article against him, “ That he had wickedly jested on “ *St. Martin’s Hood* :” And it was another Article against him, “ That he had said, that the “ People are God’s and the King’s, and not the “ Priest’s People ;” though for this he quoted a national Council. Poor *Gillebrand* an Almanack-maker, was prosecuted by the Archbishop in the *High Commission Court*, for leaving the Names of the old Popish Saints out of his Calendar, and inserting in their Room, the Names of the Protestant Martyrs. Bishop *Cofins* of *Durham*, caused three hundred Wax-candles to be lighted up in the Church on *Candlemas-day* in honour of our Lady : He forbid any Psalms to be sung before or after Sermon, but instead of Psalms, an Anthem in Praise of the three Kings of *Colen*. He declared in the Pulpit, that when our Reformers abolished the Mass, they took away all good Order. He said that the King had no more Power over the Church, than the Boy that rubbed his Horse’s Heels. For the Clergy had then assumed to themselves the Regal Supremacy ; and as the Crown had taken it from the Pope, who had usurped it, they had usurped it now from the Crown, to the Disgrace of the King, the Subversion of the Constitution, and to their own Shame, and even Perjury.

To all this, which your Lordship’s Silence has given me Occasion to say on this Head, give me Leave to add the unquestionable Testimony of the judicious and excellent Lord *Falkland*, in his Speech concerning the Bishops and their Adherents. “ It seemed, says “ he, their Work to try how much of a Pa-
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“ pift might be brought in without Popery;
 “ and to destroy as much as they could of the
 “ Gospel, without bringing themselves into
 “ danger of being destroyed by the Law.
 “ — Some of them have fo industrioufly la-
 “ boured to deduce themselves from *Rome*,
 “ that they have given great Suspicion, that in
 “ Gratitude they desire to return thither, or
 “ at least to meet it half way. Some have
 “ evidently laboured to bring in an *Engliff*,
 “ though not a *Roman* Popery: I mean not
 “ only the Outside and Dress of it, but;
 “ equally absolute, a blind Dependance of
 “ the People upon the Clergy, and of the
 “ Clergy upon themselves; and have opposed
 “ the Papacy beyond the Sea, that they might
 “ settle one beyond the Water, (namely, at
 “ *Lambeth*.) Nay, common Fame is more
 “ than ordinarily false, if none of them have
 “ found a way to reconcile the Opinions of
 “ *Rome* to the Preferments of *England*; and be
 “ so absolutely, directly, and cordially Papists,
 “ that it is all that Fifteen hundred Pounds a
 “ Year can do to keep them from confessing it.”
 “ — He had said just before, that “ they had
 “ first depressed preaching to their Power, and
 “ next laboured to make it such, as the Harm
 “ had not been much, if it had been depressed:
 “ The most frequent Subjects, even in the
 “ most sacred Auditories, being the *divine Right*
 “ of Bishops and Tithes, the Sacredness of the
 “ Clergy, the Sacrilege of Improvements, the
 “ Demolishing of Puritanism and Property, the
 “ building the Prerogative at *St. Paul’s*; the In-
 “ troduction of such Doctrines, as admitting
 “ them true, the Truth would not recompense
 “ the

“ the Scandal; or of such that were so false,
 “ that, as Sir *Thomas Moore* said of the Casu-
 “ ists, but to inform them *how near they might*
 “ *approach to Sin, without sinning.*”

What thinks your Lordship of this Picture of those Clergy? Is it not such as seemed to call for a real Reformation, and was not the Pretence of such as did so well warranted?

Your Lordship takes Notice of the Confusions which followed the King's Death, as the just Judgment of God for it. My Lord, this of God's Judgments, is a Subject infinitely nice and tender, and ought to be warily touched: Nor can I help thinking that you Clergymen generally do it too boldly, and even very partially. Judgments are very apt to pursue and overtake your Enemies, but you are not apt to see any befalling your selves. The Evils that fall to your Lot, have generally another Name, and are only Misfortunes; but if they happen to those that you dislike, they are Judgments. Pray, my Lord, what Rule have you in this Case to distinguish by? I know none; unless he who only sends Judgments, and only can tell what are Judgments, would inform you. Where he does not inform you, it is at least great Rashness, and I think very wicked, to call any Calamity befalling others, however terrible it be, by the awful Name of a Judgment. It is representing them as Enemies to God, and therefore exposing them to the Abhorrence of Men.

Divine Judgments have always been the Topick of pious Impostors, who part not readily with any Topick of Delusion; and therefore I
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am surprized to see your Lordship fall into the same Strain.

Was the unsettled State of the Nation a Judgment upon it for the Murder of the King? And were his Misfortunes and Fate no Judgment upon him, for having abused his Trust, and oppressed the Nation? But why should the Nation suffer for a Fact, which almost the whole Nation abhorred? And why did not this Judgment reach those who committed it, and who remained the only Men of Power and Prosperity after it? Why, particularly, should the Church continue cast down, forlorn and distressed, for an Iniquity abhorred by her, and perpetrated by her Enemies? Or had the Church never, by any Acts of Wantonness and Injustice formerly, merited such a Visitation as might be deemed a Judgment? But why should I, if I sin not with another, but avoid and detest sinning, suffer for what he does? And why should he, who is guilty, not suffer, or suffer less than I? Surely this Reasoning cannot be sound Divinity, since 'tis thus against all Logick and Sense.

Your Lordship must needs know that it is the way of Parties, to throw Judgments at one another, with equal Bitterness, and equal Folly. Whatever happens well to one Side, is a Blessing; whatever happens ill to the other, is a Curse. To us Evil is a Chastisement, to others 'tis a Judgment; and just so say others of us, and of themselves. Is there any Misfortune or Mischief incident to ill Men, from which the Good are exempt? Are there any worldly Felicities attending the Righteous, in which the Wicked have no Share, or not an equal Share?

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If it be said, that their being wicked is Judgment enough ; this Argument, besides that it seems to make God the Author of their Wickedness, is a Confession that what they suffer in common with others, cannot be called a Judgment.

There is no end of exposing this pious Absurdity, though it be easily done ; nor yet in reviving it upon every Occasion. The best that can be said for it is bad enough ; namely, that like other Falshoods, it serves the Turn of angry and interested Men ; it startles and convinces Bigots ; it teaches Men Ignorance, and to hate one another ; and it contributes to perpetuate Party for ever. — A Turn becoming an Incendiary and Deceiver, but not a Messenger of Truth and Peace. It is therefore very unworthy of your Lordship : And, I dare say, upon Reflection you will condemn it.

Your Assertion, “ That the Judgments of “ God for great Sins may hang over a Nation “ for many Generations,” is a very bold one, and admits of the same Confutation. How hang over a Nation ? What ! over the Earth, and Stones, and Buildings ? This your Lordship surely will not say, though things equally absurd are often said by some of your Order ; and Dr. *Trebeck* asserts in Print, that in Places consecrated there is an inherent Holiness. Such Judgments therefore must hang over the People only. — But suppose another People may have taken Possession of the Land ? Must that new People, who came from another Climate, be also visited ? If so, they might as well have suffered in their former Habitations as in their new Settlement : and then all the Nations in the Uni-

Universe may suffer for what is done wickedly by, or even in any one of them. But if new Comers are not to suffer for the Iniquities of the former People, why must this Generation, nay, every succeeding Generation, be chastised for the Sins of the Dead, for whom they are no more answerable than the wild *Indians* are for the Oppressions of the *Turks*, no more than the Pope of *Rome* is answerable for the Sins of *Romulus*? As for sinning *ex post facto*, it is a Distinction which would involve every Man in the Errors of every Man throughout the World. May not a Man, without sinning, approve what really was a Sin in him that committed it? He may approve it through Misinformation about particular Circumstances, or from want of right Discernment; neither of which is a Sin.

In consequence of your way of Reasoning, you must make all the modern and late Clergy, who approve *Laud's* violent Doings, guilty of *Laud's* Transgressions——Nay, all the future Clergy of this Spirit, must be thus wicked and guilty. As a farther Consequence of this sort of Doctrine, I should not wonder to hear your Lordship congratulating all good Churchmen, and Lovers of King *Charles I.* and his Cause, upon the Blessing derived to them from the Merits of his Life and Cause. According to the Rule of just Distribution, if some are still cursed for him, why not others blessed for him?

The next Topick of your Eloquence is, the Dread still remaining from the old Republican Spirit, which brought that King to the Block. Upon this you raise Terrors, and assert, with your usual Strength of Style: "All Places, *you* say, are filled with loose Books, which tend

“ to nothing but to destroy all Principles, and
 “ set Men free from all Government — Re-
 “ publican Principles are as industriously pro-
 “ pagated now, as they were then, and to the
 “ same Ends; to introduce a Change of Go-
 “ vernment; and in order to that, to weaken
 “ it, by weakening first the Influences of
 “ Religion, and introducing Infidelity: Which
 “ Attempts come chiefly from the Republican
 “ Quarter now, as they did then.” And you quote
 Dr. Burnet, who says, *Many of the Republicans*
began to profess Deism, and almost all of them
were for destroying all Clergymen, pulling down
Churches, discharging Tithes, and for leaving Re-
ligion without either Encouragement or Restraint.

To begin with the last: My Lord, a pro-
 fligate Clergy has often tempted Men to disbe-
 lieve Religion, whilst they notoriously contra-
 dicted it in their Actions, though they loudly
 professed it with their Lips — I know not but
 that very Time might have unsettled the Belief
 of some, and disposed them to Deism. They
 had seen a domineering Episcopal Church de-
 molished; a Presbyterian Church, equally do-
 mineering, raised in its room: Both professing
 great Holiness, even to be the Oracles of God;
 both rapacious and insatiable; merciless to all
 that differed from them, Tyrants to all who
 submitted to them; hypocritically disclaiming
 the World, and confidently grasping after all
 the Power and Grandeur in it; deriving all
 their Wealth and Power from the simple Go-
 spel of Christ, who disclaimed all Power and
 Wealth for himself, and bequeathed them none,
 but left his Example and Precepts to all Men
 indifferently, as well as to them. They had
 seen

seen Preachers of the Gospel, who never preached it, but rioted by the Name and Pretence of it; or, if they preached at all, preached up themselves: They had seen Explainers of the Scripture, who never could agree in explaining it, yet obtruding their contradictory Explanations upon all others: They had seen Ministers who had been persecuted, as soon as they had Power, persecuting others; seen others, who had been Persecutors, complain of Persecution; and both sorts ever accommodating their Doctrines to their own Views and Passions, and to the Views and Passions of such as they were disposed to flatter; both sorts indifferent, or rather Enemies to publick and equal Liberty; ever indeed contending for it to themselves when others oppressed them; ever denying it to such as they had a mind to oppress; fathering all their Doctrines, all their Whims, however selfish, wicked, or foolish, upon the Father of Wisdom, of Mercy, and of Truth; pretending to have the Call, and peaceful Guidance of the Holy Ghost, yet swayed by the worst and most hostile Passions, talking of Christian Meekness, and the Forgiveness of Enemies; indulging Fury and Vengeance upon every Offence or Contradiction; calling themselves Ambassadors of Peace, nay, Successors to the Apostles; sowing Strife, and doing nothing like the Apostles, nay, every thing unlike the Apostles; still boasting that God was with them, and that the Gates of Hell could not prevail against them, yet frightened at every Breath of Opposition.

I say, some Men seeing all these monstrous Inconsistencies, and how small Reliance there
was

was upon the Veracity or Reasoning of any Sett of Churchmen, might be tempted to think that there was nothing in Religion, because they perceived that the several Bands of Ecclesiasticks had turned Religion into a Farce and a Market, and professed what they seemed not to believe. Others too might be good Christians, yet join with no Society of Christians, like *Grotius* and some others.

Or perhaps after all, there were then no Deists, or signs of Deism; but that this Charge was invented by Priests and Bigots, who are always notoriously addicted to forge Falshoods and Calumny against those who differ from them in their Dreams and Forms. Nor indeed does Infidelity appear to have been the Turn of those Times, but rather a Humour quite opposite, that of Enthusiasm, and of false and austere Holiness. I know but of one Writer then, who was generally suspected of Infidelity, and that was Mr. *Hobbes*; no Republican, your Lordship well knows, but an Advocate for Monarchy without Bounds. Atheism came not in, at least with any Countenance or Force, till the *Restoration*. Then it prevailed and grew fashionable, and whatever or whoever had the look of Seriousness and Sobriety, grew an Object of Reproach and Ridicule: all kinds of Debauchery grew common; Lewdness and Riot overspread the whole Land. So little was Vice suppressed or Virtue promoted by the Re-establishment of the Church: Nay, many of the Clergy behaved themselves scandalously; and according to the same Dr. *Burnet*, *Sheldon* the Archbishop, (though a zealous Champion for the Rights and Powers of the Church) “seemed
“ not

“ not to have had a deep Sense of Religion,
 “ if any at all, and spoke of it most commonly
 “ as of an Engine of Government, and as mat-
 “ ter of Policy.” Even before the *Restoration*,
 impious Opinions and Sallies of Blasphemy were
 grown common amongst the Cavaliers, who
 were wont, especially in their Cups, to revile
 Almighty God for his Partiality to the Sectaries,
 and for deserting the King and the Church.
 The Account which the Bishop gives of the
 Vileness, the Bitterness, the Barbarity, the De-
 bauchery of the Clergy after the *Restoration*, is
 astonishing, and would be incredible, if the Facts
 were not known to be true.

My Lord, you will not surely say that such
 an open Dissolution of Manners, and such La-
 titudinarian Principles were promoted in that
 Reign, in order to raise a Republican Spirit.
 Far different was the Design, even to introduce
 Popery and Slavery, when both the King and
 the High-Churchmen were aiming too openly
 at Power without Controul; and nothing could
 possibly have kept alive a Republican Spirit (a
 Spirit which had grown odious to the whole
 Nation, by the late Tyranny exercised under
 the Name of the *Commonwealth*) I say nothing
 could possibly keep alive such a Spirit, but the
 apparent ill Designs and violent Measures of
 the Court and the Clergy. Men who are op-
 pressed, or who foresee inevitable Oppression,
 will be naturally thinking of the Means of Se-
 curity and Escape. But when they are well
 and equally protected, when the Laws are in-
 violable, and Property secure, no general or
 violent Change is to be apprehended, especially
 where the Title to the Crown is uncontested.
 Nor

Nor do I remember that a Commonwealth was ever thought of in *England*, or any Dislike conceived against the Government, or any Subversion of the Church intended, till some of our Monarchs had rendered Monarchy distasteful; and the Church, like the Monarchy, when through the Pride and Fury of the Bishops it was become terrible, became likewise odious.

It was this which first occasioned the Notion and Proposal of introducing a Commonwealth, which yet never was settled, nor ever can be settled in *England*. Even the Tyranny of King *James* the Second, (to say nothing further of his Brother's wild and unhallowed Reign) as provoking and recent as it was, did not produce any Effort for a Commonwealth. I do not remember that the Word was once mentioned in either House, upon their Convention; and if it was mentioned at all elsewhere, it was only in Whispers, by two or three Visionaries, who were not regarded, and had no Party.

A Commonwealth in *England* will never be other than a Dream, existing only in crazy Heads; all Men of common Sense know that we enjoy more Liberty, more equal Protection under our own legal Monarchy, as 'tis administered by His Majesty, than we could in any Commonwealth existing, or that ever did exist. Neither did I ever find that there was, nor do I believe that there is, one reasonable Man in His Dominions, that thinks such a Change either eligible or possible. This I speak in the Sincerity, and from the Conviction of my Heart.

It is therefore highly blameable in any one, much more so in one of your Lordship's great Station and Credit, to raise publick Alarms,
I and

and to endeavour to infuse Fears into His Majesty's Breast, of Principles that no where appear, and of a Party that, from my Soul I think, do not exist. This is as unjust, as it would be to raise in his People a Dread of His Majesty; nor can there be a greater Crime than publishing Terrors and Tales, tending to break the Confidence between King and People. Just such Tendency had the old Cry, about *the Danger of the Church*; a popular Alarm then calculated only to frighten Prince and People, and big with Mischief and Falshood. This false Terror, and Party-Word, your Lordship has finely exposed, in a Sermon of yours when you were Dean of *Worcester*. I am sorry to find your Courage smaller now, when your Church Emoluments are much larger.

Your Lordship knows, that that Cry of the *Church's Danger*, was accompanied with another, equally bold and absurd, *the Danger of a Commonwealth*. My Lord, you likewise know, who they were who raised and promoted those wild Alarms, what violent Effects they had, and what farther Effects they were like to have had. Nor will you, I presume, say, that what evidently endangered the State and the Protestant Succession then, will serve either now.

My Lord, where are these Republicans? For myself, I know none; I protest solemnly to your Lordship, I know none; none who are for a Commonwealth, or any other Change of Government, except the *Jacobites*. Where too are those loose Books, which tend to destroy all Principles, and set Men free from all Governments? Loose Books are certainly punishable, and have been punished. For lewd and

obscene Books Men have been imprisoned and pilloried. For Books which have treated Religion with Indecency, Men have been imprisoned and fined; though some of the Authors seemed crazy, and fitter for *Bedlam*, than a Goal.

What other Books your Lordship means, I cannot be sure. I can by no Means suppose that you would thus revile Books which you cannot answer; Books which profess to combat Falshood, Imposture, and false Reasoning; Books which assert the natural and legal Rights of Men against such as would allow Liberty to none but themselves, and claim as their Right what neither God, nor Nature, nor Law, ever gave them. Loose Books, methinks, should be easily answered and refuted; and so many thousand Clergymen, with their superior Piety and Learning, be an over-match for all the loose Writers in the World.

Loose Books, I doubt, there ever will be in the World; especially in free Countries, where there is no way of preventing them but by the utter Extinction of Liberty: Nor will even this prevent them, though it be a Price too dear for silencing foolish and profane Writers. In *Italy* and *Spain*, where none write but the Clergy, or by their Permission, there are many loose and profane Books. Nor can there be looser, or more pernicious, not to say blasphemous Books upon the Earth, than such as compliment the Clergy with Powers equal to those of the Deity; make them Gods upon Earth, and assert their Authority even to Damn and to Save; to dispose of the other World, and
confe-

consequently of this. I know not whether open Systems of Atheism were not less hurtful; since it is less Indignity to the Deity, to suppose him not to exist, than to suppose him the Author of such Fooleries and Barbarities as the Clergy there impiously father upon him. Your Lordship knows what *Plutarch* says upon this Subject; it has been always applauded, never confuted.

My Lord, it cannot surprize your Lordship to be told, that the Clergy almost in all Countries, have written more loose Books than any other Sett of Men upon Earth; that even in *England* they have done so. Let me quote you the Authority of a Reverend Doctor for what I say; nay, from a Speech of his to his Brethren the Clergy in Convocation, even when they were censuring loose Books. “ With
 “ what Face, Mr. *Prolocutor*, says he, or with
 “ what Conscience, can we offer to complain of
 “ the Licentiousness taken by Lay Writers,
 “ and yet connive at the like Offences given
 “ by the Ministers of our Church: I doubt,
 “ greater Offences? For, if all the ill Books
 “ against Religion, Scriptures, Laws of this
 “ Land, and Constitution of this Church, were
 “ here packed up together, I would undertake
 “ to pick out the worst of them, by pointing
 “ at those written by Clergymen, even of the
 “ most profane Drollery, as well as the most
 “ serious Heresy.”

Your Lordship cannot but know, how many loose and profane Sermons have been preached and published upon this very Solemnity, every Year since it was instituted; how many, (too too many) of the Preachers have made it a Day of Strife and Animosity: What Falshoods they

have uttered; what wicked Principles they have advanced, what impious Comparisons they have made; yet at the same time, with strange Boldness, and indeed Blindness, complained of loose and Republican Doctrines prevailing, to the great Peril of Church and State; nay, still denounced Judgments, and still railed at the Freedom and Licentiousness of the Age.

Your Lordship is justly angry at Libels: Can there be greater or more poisonous Libels, than such Sermons as these, or worse Libels against Religion or Government? For they were generally levelled against the Constitution, Toleration, Peace, and Charity. Surely, your Lordship, in calling for a Remedy against the Licentiousness of the Age, could not fail to have principally in your Eye the Licentiousness of the Pulpit, the most scandalous Licentiousness of all, and to wish for a Restraint upon Preaching. Without such a Restraint as this, you cannot consistently, nor with any Degree of Candor, call for one upon the Press. Of all Demagogues, preaching Demagogues, spiritual Demagogues, have been the most implacable and mischievous, as well as the most busy and barbarous of all Incendiaries: What Class of Men has ever sounded the Trumpet to Sedition and Blood, with such Frequency and Success, as they?

My Lord, I shall say but little here upon the Liberty of the Press. The same ingenious and sensible Hand, who has answered you already upon that Head, is able to support his own Reasoning. If it be a Liberty, that is sometimes troublesome to the Clergy, it brings a Remedy along with it; and none use it more freely than they; and they of all Men complain
of

of it with the worst Grace; they who are so nobly encouraged, so amply endowed, with Learning, and Revenue, and Leisure, to defend Truth, and assault Error. Where they have Reason and the Gospel on their Side, with so many subordinate Advantages, What can stand before them? What Falshood? What Error? And where Truth and Reason are against them, and they against these, Why should the same be left undefended? When these are on their Side, they will defend themselves. What would they have more?

Wherever Liberty is unequal or restrained, so far Truth will for ever be found impaired; and with the suppressing of free Enquiry and Argument, Truth will be suppressed. Hence 'tis quite lost, or at best disowned, in *Italy* and *Spain*, where the Press is thoroughly restrained; and according to the Degrees of such Restraint, will be the Degrees of Truth and Error, of Knowledge and Ignorance, every where.

The Clergy surely will not say, that they distrust their Cause. What then do they distrust? What indeed can resist a good Cause supported by good Reasons? Whoever attacks it has but one bad Weapon against two excellent ones, namely, Cavilling against Right, and against Argument defending Right. God's Cause therefore is hard to be opposed, and easily defended. Nor can it be at all opposed, where human Follies, and the Interests of Men come not to be by them blended with divine Truths, and both called by the same good Names, declared to be inseparable, and contended for without Distinction. Here indeed there will be abundant room for an Attack, and even for a Victory.

But

But simple and sincere Truth can surely never be vanquished, where her Champions are not disarmed, as they are in *Popish* and *Mahometan* Countries: and therefore such who are conscious of being the Champions of Truth, must heartily despise the Champions of Error; and none but the Champions of Error can justly fear the Champions of Truth. I therefore wonder at your Lordship's Fears. You have been engaged in Controversy, and from that Trial must have found the Advantage of the Liberty of the Press, with the Truth of what I say, how superior an Advocate for honest and open Truth must be to one who quibbles, equivocates and frets; in support of By-ends, Pride and Hypocrisy. Probably too Scoffers may say, that Losers must have leave to complain, and that you are an Enemy to the Liberty of the Press, because the Liberty of the Press proved no Friend to you.

Besides, methinks it suits not well with a Successor of the Apostles, to be calling for Helps which the Apostles never sought. They had the Tongues and Pens of all Men against them, and never desired the Privilege of being alone heard, whilst others were obliged to be silent. Your Lordship is better situated than they: You live in a Christian Country, and have a great Revenue from your Country to preach and write for Religion, nay have it though you be altogether idle. Are there loose Books abroad, are there evil Opinions stirring? Confute them, My Lord: Such Books and Opinions can never resist the Word of God and of Reason. Your Lordship will not say, that the World, the Christian World, is worse than it was in a State

State of Paganism. This would be to make an ill Compliment to Christian Teachers maintained at so great an Expence for so many hundred Years.

For the Government, my Zeal is as great as your Lordship's can be, indeed too great to wish it the Odium of restraining the Press; an Attempt very unpopular and unjust. The Press was always most abused when shut up, neither has it ever been, nor can it ever be so abused when open, though the Abuse from thence too, has been and is very great. But no Good which Man enjoys, is exempt from Abuse, not even Religion nor Government, nor Health nor Power, nor Liberty nor Property.

My Lord, I cannot desire to see a Privilege in the Hands of this Government, which every Government has abused as often as they had it: For, in short, there never was any such Restraint but upon one Side, who first thus disarmed the other, and then cudgelled them without Mercy. We know when it was that Liberty and the Protestant Religion were written and preached away, and by whom, with Impunity, nay with Applause and Rewards; and when it was, and by whom, that every Answer, every Defence was made Penal, if not Capital.

Your Lordship has another Source of Terrors, from the supposed Growth of Deism. Were there real Ground for this, I do not think it politick in a Bishop to own it, for fear of invidious Questions. I have already said something of this Matter: I shall here add something more.

I know not how it happens, but the Clergy have almost always something to fear, Deism or Heresy, or Schism or Dissenters, or false Brethren.

thren. This has sometimes served their Purposes, whenever they wanted new Powers of Penalties, or Acts of Vengeance, and when People were ignorant enough to grant them whatever they wanted; nor would they have had a Pretence for desiring such Powers, had they not pleaded terrible Fears and Alarms. But the old Cry and Artifice will not now do; for, Men are not so easily frightened or misled, nor so ready to adopt the selfish Interests and Passions of the Clergy.

Does Deism indeed increase? Why does not your Lordship, why do not the Clergy confute it? What else have you been attending to, for so many Ages? The Cause of Truth must for ever prevail, if its Champions do not desert it, and pursue other Designs. Your Lordship would not suggest, that Truth wants another Set of Champions, less lazy and interested, more able and exemplary. To say the Truth, some of our present Champions hardly deserve the Name, yet still confidently assume and retain it. And 'tis really odd enough, to see an idle Creature rolling in Wealth, Luxury and Ease, living voluptuously every Day, preaching perhaps once a Year, (even then probably) not the Gospel, but some favourite Point of Power, or Revenue; daily accumulating Riches; changing almost yearly from Diocese to Diocese; still aiming at a better, and the highest of all; hardly visiting any, or staying long enough with any one Flock, to know them, scarce seeing them, much less feeding them, yet still calling them by that tender Name, without blushing; to see him multiplying Benefices and *Commendams*; holding several great Cures

without attending upon one, yet declaiming; after and in the midst of all this, against the Prevalence of Deism and loose Principles; and shamefully calling for worldly Restraints against Reasoning, for Violence against Opinions. Is it not exceeding natural, my Lord, for all Men of Discernment; nay, for all Men who have Eyes, to stand amazed at such wild Inconsistency of his Complaints, and his Conduct?

I doubt it will be found hard to answer what Mr. *Whiston* has said in his *Memoirs of Dr. Clarke*, "It is clearly my Opinion, says he, that till our Defenders of Christianity do more than they have most of them hitherto done, as to affording the World this Conviction, that they are really *in Earnest* themselves; particularly, till our Bishops leave off procuring *Commendams*, and heaping up Riches and Preferments on themselves, their Relations and Favourites: Nay, till they correct their *Non-Residence*, till they leave the Court, the Parliament, and their Politicks, and go down to their several Dioceses, and there labour in the *Vineyard* of Christ, instead of standing the most part of the Day idle at the Metropolis: They may write what learned *Vindications* and *Pastoral Letters* they please, the observing Unbelievers will not be satisfied they are *in Earnest*, and, by Consequence, will be little moved by all their Arguments and Exhortations." To this Quotation I will add, That Residence formerly was reckoned of indispensible, indeed of divine Obligation, in the Opinion of many able Casuists. Cardinal

Cajetan particularly thought it so, till great Preferments and Dignity gave him new Lights.

Restraints upon Opinion and Conscience, have an evident Tendency to increase Hypocrisy and Infidelity, instead of curing or preventing them; as is notorious in Countries where the Inquisition is established, that is to say, the highest of all Restraints, Imprisonment, Confiscation, Tortures, and burning alive. Even there, and in spite of all these ugly and inhuman Horrors, Deists, nay Atheists, are more numerous than any where. And the Reason is strong and obvious. For, (besides that the Clergy there, and indeed in many other Places beyond Sea, are extremely profligate and scandalous, and utterly despised by all Men, who are not quite bewitched with Grimace and Priestcraft,) as People there dare not reason, nor shew or propose any of their Doubts, they acquire evil Notions, and still retain the same, since it would be Capital to own or explain them. Moreover, though the Clergy are bad and licentious enough, even in some Places where there is no Inquisition, they are most scandalously so where they have one; and 'tis most true, that the ill Lives of the Clergy every where, their Pride and Hypocrisy, their Rage and Avarice, contribute too evidently to discredit Religion, which they thus disgrace, and seem not to believe. Hence all their Reasonings for Religion, especially where with such Reasonings they mix selfish Tenets of their own, are despised; and some People may perhaps come to doubt the Being of a God, because they who call themselves his Ministers,
live

live and act as if there was none; nor can they think that Men that are covetous or cruel, whatever sacred Names they bear, are at all related to the God of Mercy; or that any good Being could employ bad ones in his Service, and in so holy a Cause.

The pious and learned Dr. *Henry More*, in his *Mystery of Godliness*, has a Section to shew that the Hypocrisy of Professors fills the World with Atheists. "Men, *says he*, are exceedingly
 "tempted, to think the whole Business of Religion, is at best but a Plot to enrich the Priests,
 "and keep the People in awe, from their observing that they who make the greatest Noise
 "about Religion, and are the most zealous therein, do neglect the Laws of Honesty, and common Humanity: That they can easily invade
 "other Mens Right; that they can juggle, dissemble and lye, for Advantage: That they
 "are proud, conceited, love the Applause of the People; are envious, fierce, and implacable, unclean and sensual, merciless and cruel;
 "care not to have Kingdoms flow in Blood for maintaining their Tyranny over the Consciences of poor deluded Souls."

Knows your Lordship any Thing more whimsical, any thing more unmodest, than that, when the publick Teachers are so singularly provided for, and possessed of all Advantages, to defend a good Cause; yet these Men, called to this holy Vocation, instead of making Converts by Pains, by Persuasion, and by pious Lives, should be continually calling upon the Civil Power to do by Terror and Force, what they ought to do by godly Exhortations, and a heavenly Example; to do what can never be done by any other Means, much less by opposite Means? My

Lord, intemperate ways are not the ways of Christ, nor intemperate Words his Words; at least he never encouraged them in others.

But still I believe that this Cry of *Deism* is but an idle and ill-grounded Cry; and hope that our Teachers have been, and still are too diligent and successful Labourers in their Master's Vineyard, to suffer such a Weed to grow up, at least to spread. My Lord, where are these Deists? What Company does your Lordship keep, what Books do you read? I have hardly ever seen any Book against Christianity; and in Books that attack Priestcraft, Christianity is no ways concerned; and to attack Authors who profess to be Christians, and only write against Priestcraft, as what has corrupted Christianity, is it self downright Priestcraft. 'Tis become a stale Art, to call such Writers Atheists or Deists.

My Lord, I wish that all Men were Christians, but am not for cutting off Deists, who like others that differ from us, are only to be dealt with by Reason and Persuasion. Nor can Deism be ever terrible to the Publick, since Deists are never likely to overspread and possess a Nation: The Bulk of Mankind will always be rather over credulous, than incredulous; and Men of any Sense will never be the worse Neighbours or Subjects for their Speculations, though they pay no Regard to the Systems of Churchmen. And if a Man acts agreeably to good Sense, and the Impulses of Humanity, he is a good Member of Society; nor need his Fellow-Members look further, much less trouble or hurt him for differing from them, which is no more than what they do by him. But a Bigot is ever a ready Instrument of Mischief,
a ready

a ready Tool for the Ambition or Cruelty of his Leaders, and apt to call Good Evil, and Evil Good. "Hot Zealots, (says Father *Paul*) "believing every thing to be justifiable which "is done with a View to Religion, come "thence to act against Religion; nay, even "against common Humanity; and thus have "set the World in a dreadful Combustion."

In *China*, all Men of Consideration, all of any Eminence for Learning or Dignity, are Deists. I wish that in *Spain* and *Italy*, and in many other Countries called Christian, as much Civil Felicity, and as many Marks of Prosperity were found, as in *China*: It were indeed better for Mankind, that all fiery Catholics and Bigots every where, were converted into rational and sober *Chineses*. To be Followers of Christ is the best Choice, and the sure Road to Happiness: But to follow Priests and Bigots in most Countries, and in most of their Ways, is not to follow Christ, or Happiness, or common Sense.

My Lord, it is a great Presumption, 'tis very uncandid, to charge Men with Opinions which they do not own; it is worse to charge them with Opinions which they utterly disown. It is unjust to charge them with one obnoxious Opinion in consequence of another, nay, to take both for granted; to suppose a Man is a Deist, and therefore a Republican; or a Republican, and therefore a Deist. Does it become a good Christian, or a fair Reasoner, or a well bred Man, to assert or insinuate such Things? Is it not a wicked thing, to prejudice his Majesty against any part of his good Subjects? to bring a false, at best precarious Accusation against them? to represent them to Him as Republicans,
and

and to Bigots as Infidels? Why Republicans, when they have as much Liberty and Protection as ever any Government could bestow, as much as any Subject could desire or enjoy? Do they confess any such Principles or Spirit? Why Deists? Do they own themselves so? Or why should Deism spread? No body is paid to maintain Deism; nor does any Interest attend it, but Obloquy and Unpopularity. Sure, They must be miserably weak for whom Deism is too strong.

'Tis an old Artifice, one much beneath your Lordship, or any Man of Probity and Honour, an Artifice only worthy of miserable Bigots and little sower Priests, thus to represent Men as Enemies to God and the King, because they presume to differ in Opinion with some of the Clergy.

Thus almost all the learned Men at the *Reformation* were reckoned Hereticks, if not Atheists, because they were no great Admirers of the Monks, or perhaps for reforming the Clergy: Thus the first Christians were by the *Pagan* Priests and Persecutors traduced, as Enemies to the Gods, and to *Cæsar*; and thus all the Dissenters in this Nation were continually branded by the Parsons, as certain Enemies to Monarchy, and therefore unworthy of Toleration, or even of Protection; and that Imputation continued confidently, till it was no longer believed; and long Experience has quite confuted the Parsons. We are again alarmed with the old Cry, or a new one just like the old, and from the same Quarter, and for the same Ends. There are Hosts of Republicans and Deists, God knows where, like the Army which lay Incognito at *Knightsbridge*.

It is an easy matter to raise Phantoms, and to frighten the Crowd, generally infatuated with Superstition and false Zeal; nay, a good Degree of Confidence, and strong Assertion, will often mislead Men of Sense; the most groundless Invention often finds many Vouchers, and sometimes gains such Credit and Belief, that it is unsafe to deny it, much more to expose it: Instances of this are endless.

Your Lordship cannot forget what an Up-roar was raised some Years ago about a *Hell-fire Club*, said to be subsisting in *London*; how much it alarmed the Clergy, how much the Clergy alarmed others, and how zealously they called (as usual) for the Aid of the Secular Arm; what a solemn Proclamation ensued, full of pathetick Strains, and of all due Horror against such an impious Society; how the Lord Chancellor was directed by the King, the Justices of Peace by the Lord Chancellor, to find out these dark Assemblies, and bring them to Punishment; how generally this terrible Story was believed, how much it filled Conversation, and employed the Pulpit and the Press; how Gentlemen of Name and Fortune, nay, Ladies of eminent Quality, were confidently charged with being Members of this horrible Club. Never was a finer Topick for haranging, for spreading Hatred and Terror, Abuse and Calumny. It was become fashionable, nay, orthodox to believe it; 'twas Infidelity to doubt it, and they were Atheists who denied it. Now where did all this mighty Tumult, these pannick Terrors, and this solemn Enquiry, end? Even in a Discovery, that there was no such Discovery to be made. Yet I never heard that the vile Broachers of such a wicked Alarm, that the wicked Au-

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thors or Promoters of so much Calumny, ever took Shame to themselves. No: Some sort of Men never own themselves in the wrong, even when they are convicted of having done it. It would be a Digression to mention here, what a knavish Purpose this pious and popular Cry was intended to answer.

As of all Truths, the Truths of Religion are the most valuable; so of all Falshoods, religious Falshoods are the most mischievous: Because with the misled Vulgar they are made to pass for religious Truths. What destructive Effects they have had, what Seditions they have produced, what Wars, what Persecutions and Massacres, would require a Volume to specify and explain.

My Lord, I beg pardon for detaining you so long. I hope it will not offend your Lordship, that I have spoken my Mind thus freely concerning your late Performance, which is itself a very free one. I hope I have treated you with Civility: without Passion or Anger, or any personal Prejudice, I am sure I have. I honour your Abilities, and your high Station in the Church, and I am,

With great Respect,

Cambridge,
March 25. 1732.

My Lord, &c.

P. S. I should have troubled your Lordship with these Observations much sooner, but that I really hoped to see something equally full of this sort offered from some other Hand upon so remarkable a Sermon: For the Author of the Letter to you attends but to a few Points in it. I think the whole worth considering, even more fully than I have done it.

F I N I S.